

MINUTES OF THE EMBLETON QUARRY WORKING GROUP

held on Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 7.00pm in the Creighton Hall

Present: Terry Howells (TJH) – Chair, Raymond Carss (RC), Ian Brown (IB), Margaret Watchorn (MW), John Young (JY), Clive Middlebrook (CM), Andy Davis (AD)

1. Apologies: Gary Woodburn (GW), Kevin Redgrave (KR), Sarah Coxon (SC), David Cooper (DC), Andrew Hindle (AH)

2. Declarations of Interest: None

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 1st March were accepted as a true record by all; proposed JY, seconded CM and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising:

4.1 Insurance: The Chair confirmed that EPC's insurance will cover volunteers working in the quarry grounds if risk assessments are in place. This is the case. Insurance will not cover work undertaken on Quarry House.

As discussed at the previous meeting, it was agreed an excess of £250 would be covered should damage occur to hired equipment when JY is using it.

MW has produced Weil's disease information cards which were circulated to those present. Additional copies are available from MW for all volunteers.

4.2 Fund raising talk: No progress made to date; concern was expressed by members as to whether costs for running the event would be covered. The Chair will discuss this with the person offering the talk.

TJH

4.3 Water supply: KR reported via email that the water trough was connected successfully in one day; the bill is to pay.

4.4 Information storage: MW has received the laptop formerly used by EPC. It will be used for backup storage of all documents and photographs.

5. AONB bid: The Chair reported that Stage 1 AONB grant money has been paid and the loan from EPC has been repaid. An application for Stage 2 has been made and acknowledged by AONB and will be discussed in mid-April. The Chair stated that we are not confident in succeeding and JY explained that guidelines are changing for some grant applications. GW has arguments ready should the application fail. Should AONB funding not be forthcoming, IB and JY are investigating possible funding through a local Wind Farm Community Fund; they will pursue the matter and report back. The Chair suggested that the Association for Industrial Archaeology may be another avenue to follow.

IB/JY

6. Quarry House: Nothing to discuss.

7. Events:

Bioblitz: No further information on this. MW will follow up with AONB and NCC for the next meeting.

MW

Platinum Jubilee Weekend event: The Chair reported that plans had not

materialised.

Firewalking event: JY reported that tickets for this are available through Eventbrite, priced £22.15, of which the quarry fund would receive £20. It was agreed that volunteers would rattle buckets to raise funds from spectators. JY outlined the evening as described on Eventbrite; he expected that people would be prepared to travel to it and interest has already been expressed. The Chair offered to contact Whinstone Times editors to arrange an article in the next issue. JY will publicise the event on Facebook and Nextdoor Embleton. JY confirmed that a risk assessment and method statement will be made four days in advance, and a second risk assessment made on the day. Registration will be at 5.00pm for a 6.00pm firewalk; the site will be cleared by 9.30pm. JY is willing to police the site afterwards if necessary.

TJH

JY

8. Projects:

8.1 Pond overflow: KR reported via email that two clearances have been necessary this month. CM has suggested that a rota would be useful and explained that a path will be cleared to make access easier.

8.2 Paths and outdoor classroom: CM informed members that the outdoor classroom tarpaulin is now stored in the container. A pulley/ratchet system will be used to raise and anchor the tarpaulin; CM will work out how long it takes to erect and dismantle it. KR explained via email that further rolling work by JY would help to smooth and flatten some areas, including paths where needed. JY explained that plinths have not been constructed yet due to a delay in delivering equipment. He expects that work will be done over the weekend after Easter and confirmed that cement will be mixed offsite to avoid mess.

CM

8.3 Dark Skies: GW and the Chair continue to raise concern over streetlights. NCC have still not raised an order to reduce lumens; they have agreed to do this and will provide further details to the Chair. No Dark Skies events have been programmed yet, but it is expected that more will take place in the autumn. No action yet over carving of signs, but this is in hand.

8.4 Management Plan: Nothing to report at present.

9. Working parties: KR explained via email that work parties have been low in numbers but very successful in results. Cut grass has been cleared, cut scrub burned, bird and bat boxes installed, the south field bonfire site cleared and tree limbs there cut and cleared. The ponies are still offsite. Focus is now on regular maintenance of paths, cutting fresh growth of brambles and cleaning the NE corner stony bank of gorse and cotoneaster. Alternate Wednesday afternoons were agreed as the best time for working parties. Impromptu mini-groups on specific small tasks can also take place.

10. AOB:

a) For information, the Chair explained that EPC has approved a request by GW to rent a strip of land to allow a path for wheelchair access at the north side of Whinstone View. A fence will be re-erected

b) The Chair reported that a letter concerning tree planting had been received, supported by NCC and the Forestry Commission. MW asked if specific species

could be requested, and members agreed that the right tree in the right place is important. The Chair will ask KR if more are needed for the quarry. JY suggested and members agreed that we accept the trees and locate them in the community if they are not needed in the quarry. TJH

c) RC asked if notices would be erected once the ponies return to the south field. MW pointed out that notices on the kissing gates in the quarry will need to be changed and agreed to ask KR about this. MW

d) JY pointed out that hosting guided visits in the quarry for schools might be a future source of revenue, with the Creighton Hall possibly being used as a base.

e) The Chair informed members that the Women's Club had asked him to give a talk in August about the quarry. He will ask KR or GW to join him; MW also volunteered to help if needed. TJH

11. Date of next meeting: Tuesday May 3rd at 7.00pm in the Creighton Hall.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.